(c) whether a demand has been made by the hotel industry of Orissa that international conferences should equally be organized in Orissa to boost tourism; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, indicating the action of Government to address this issue?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Tourism has been gradually picking up in Orissa as is apparent from the annual growth of 8.4%, 11.5% and 12.3% in the number of tourist visits to the State during the years 2003, 2004 and 2005 respectively. However, it is generally recognized that Orissa, with its great treasures of art, architecture and rich cultural heritage, *viz.,* festivals, dances, handicrafts, its rural countryside, wildlife and beautiful beaches, etc. spread throughout the State, has immense tourism potential to improve foreign and domestic tourist visits with better tourism infrastructure such as hotels, road, rail and air connectivity and vigoruous promotion and marketing efforts.

(c) and (d) No representation has been received by the Ministry from the hotel industry of Orissa in this regard. The Ministry of Tourism is, however, committed towards promotion of different tourism products, including International Conferences, Exhibitions and Meetings in all the States of the country, including Orissa. The India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB), which has members from travel trade industry, is a nonprofit organization sponsored by the Ministry, with the objective to promote India as an ideal destination for International Conferences and to assist organizers with the bidding and management of International Conferences and Conventions. The Ministry of Tourism also helps the States in organizing fam tours of foreign tour operators for better marketing of State tourism products.

Declaration of Shrt Naithana Devi mountain as a Model Tourist Site

†1453. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a representation has been received regarding

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

declaration of Shri Naithana Devi mountain in Uttaranchal as a model tourist site given its attractive natural beauty;

(b) whether it is a also a fact that having been impressed by its natural beauty a fort was built at the apex of this mountain by Gorkhas before 200 years which is now lying in dilapidated condition; and

(c) if so, the action taken by Government to provide infrastructure like roads and tourists rest house and also for its beautification?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) No such proposal has been received from the State Government to declare Shri Naithana Devi mountain in Uttaranchal as a model tourist site.

Development and promotion of tourism is undertaken primarily by the State Governments/UT Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, extends financial assistance to the State Governments/ UT Administrations for tourism related projects which are identified in consultation and interaction with them under schemes for Integrated Development of Tourist circuits, Product/Infrastructure Development of Destinations and Assistance to Large Revenue Generating Projects.

Following projects have been prioritized for the State of Uttranchal in the year 2006-07:

Destination

1. Yamunotri
2. Tehri

.Circuit

1. Rishikesh-Haridwar (Mega Project)
2. Binsar-Baijnath-Manesar

Events/Festivals

1. Dehradun Virasat Festival
2. Garhwal Festival
3. Kumaon Festival
4. Purnagiri Fair

Rural Tourism

1. Trijugi Narayan, Distt. Rudraprayag

A list of projects sanctioned in Uttaranchal during the year 2006-07 is enclosed as Statement (See below).

Statement

Statement showing projects sanctioned to the State of Uttaranchal during the year 2006-07

(Rs. in lakh)

Sl. No.	Name of Project/Scheme	Amount sanctioned
1.	IT in the State Tourism Department	50.00
2.	Pumagiri Fair, 2007	05.00
3.	Virasat International Heritage and Folk Life Festival, 2006	10.00
4.	Development of Yamunotri Dham	448.99
5.	Garhwal Mahotsav-2006	10.00
6.	Kumaon Mahotsav-2006	5.00
	TOTAL:	528.99

Stetting up of National Tourism Development Board

†1454. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have already considered the proposal for setting up of a National Tourism Development Board for the integrated development of tourism;

(b) if so, whether Central Government have held consultation with the State Governments;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.